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ABSTRACT

The overall themes of the papers given at the 1979 Conference on Asian and Pacific American Education are summarized here. Topics are equal educational opportunities for Asian and Pacific Americans; the educational needs of Pacific American communities; school district policymaking; the responsiveness of postsecondary education to Asian and Pacific American needs; the National Institute of Education's role in educational research and development; multicultural education; Asian American studies; education and income inequality among Asian Americans; political definitions of educational issues affecting immigrant children; and bilingual day care programs for Asian American children. (CMG)

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ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICAN EDUCATION:

DIRECTIONS FOR THE 1980s

A Conference Report

April 1979

San Francisco, California

UD023 226

A REPORT

of the highlights of the first conference of the National Association for Asian and Pacific American Education held April 25, 26, and 27, 1979 in San Francisco and co-sponsored by APACS/US Office of Education and the National Institute of Education, DHEW.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
ASIAN-AMERICAN AND PACIFIC EDUCATION

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Approximately 600 people attended the conference. Fifty percent came from California and nearly 10% from Washington. Hawaii and Washington, DC were tied for the next largest contingents. All together, people came from 24 states, Guam, American Samoa, DC, Canada, Japan, the Philippines, and Australia.

On a scale of 0 (lowest) to 4 (highest), 87% of the evaluation questionnaire respondents gave the conference as a whole ratings of 4 and 3.

Individual presentations received the gamut of ratings. However, the media and research sessions were particularly well-received. Joint presentations were favored over individual ones in most cases.

The major benefit of the conference, however, was the bringing together of people who were previously unable to interact with others involved in Asian and Pacific American education on a national level. This fact clearly and quickly surfaced in comments, notes, cards, letters, and calls received during and after the conference. NAAAPE is hopeful that the spirit of mutual support and cooperation will continue and grow during the 1980's.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NAAAPE thanks everyone who supported the conference with time, ideas, and funds. Special thanks also go to Wilbert Tom, Fumi Matsumoto, Teresita Batayola, Gordon Chun, Pat Jang, Sau-Lim Tsang, A. Barretto Ogilvie, Alice Lum, Stephen Thom, Mary Jackson, Gladys Chang Keith Hardy, and Elizabeth Abramowitz. The conference chairperson was Linda Wing who also compiled this report.

PAPERS

For a nominal charge, a limited number of a selection of the papers presented at the conference are available to interested people. The keynote speeches of California Secretary of State March Fong Eu and Guamanian Senator Katherine B. Aguon may also be obtained. NAAAPE members are eligible for discounts on association publications. For information, write to Linda Wing, c/o Asian American Bilingual Center, 2168 Shattuck Ave., 3rd floor, Berkeley, CA 94704 or call 415/848-3199.

Beginning with its Summer 1979 issue, BRIDGE magazine will feature some of the conference papers. For further information contact William Wang, 50 Green St., No. 403, Brookline, MA 02146.

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CAPTIONS FOR PHOTOS

1. Pio DeCano, NAAAPE president, Seattle, Washington and Elizabeth Abramowitz, Domestic Policy Council, the White House

2. Linda Wing, NAAAPE vice-president and conference chairperson, Berkeley, California

3. Teresita Batayola, conference operations manager, Tacoma, Washington

4. (left to right) Gladys Chang Keith Hardy, Mary Jackson, Gwendolyn Baker, and Todd Endo; all from NIE, Washington, DC

5. Katherine B. Aguon, Senator, 15th Guam Legislature

6. March Fong Eu, California Secretary of State

7. (left to right) Linda Wing, Berkeley, California; Janet Lu, Seattle, Washington; Teresita Ramos, Honolulu, Hawaii; and Jeannette Kwok, Washington, DC

8. East West Players, Los Angeles, California

On the following pages are summaries of ten of the conference presentations.

I. Address: **Equal Educational Opportunities for Asian and Pacific Americans: a Hope for the 1980's**

Speaker: **The Honorable March Fong Eu, EdD, Secretary of State, State of California**

In her remarks, March Fong Eu stressed the importance of the upcoming 1980 Census to Asian and Pacific Americans. "No more important demographic tool exists in this country, and rightly or wrongly, the census has become the tail that wags the dog of many very important social, economic, and educational programs of crucial interest to ethnic minorities," stated Secretary Eu. Because Asian and Pacific Americans have been undercounted in the past, the secretary urged Asian and Pacific Americans to participate in the census and to promote an awareness of its importance. She observed: "It is perhaps a sad fact but nonetheless true that the funding mechanism for many of the programs we need are based on the simple formula that says, 'You don't count unless you are counted.'"

II. Address: **Educational Needs of Pacific American Communities**

Speaker: **The Honorable Katherine B. Aguon, PhD, Senator, 15th Guam Legislature**

Katherine B. Aguon called for the assertion of independence by Pacific Islanders as they examine their educational needs. In her view, solutions and perspectives imported to Guam from the mainland have historically resulted in cultural, economic, and social contradictions for the native inhabitants of the island, the Chamorros. For all of Guam's residents, many of them Asian immigrants, the senator warned, an indulgent but not an affirmative multicultural society exists. The institutions and values of statesiders dominate island life to the detriment of the majority of the island's people. The senator called for an educational system that makes sense for Pacific Islanders as determined by Pacific Islanders.

III. Major Session: **School District Policy-Making: Challenges of the Next Decade**

Presenters: **Jessie Kobayashi, superintendent, Murray Elementary School District, Dublin, California; Paul Sakamoto, superintendent, Mountain View-Los Altos High School District, Mountain View, California; Ben Tom, member, Board of Education, San Francisco School District; and Soleng Tom, member, Board of Education, Tucson School District No. 1**

Paul Sakamoto encouraged Asian Americans to become involved with the schools. "Asian Americans have a great deal of credibility in any community," he pointed out, "and we haven't taken advantage or capitalized on that . . . people think if Asian Americans are concerned about an issue, the issue must really be serious."

Sakamoto asked for more mutual support among Asian Americans. Too often, he noted, there is a tendency for Asian Americans to criticize each other and fragment. He also observed that education is so important to minorities that they often support it blindly; many times bad teachers and unfair practices towards students are tolerated.

Finally, the superintendent examined occupational stereotyping of Asian Americans. He urged Asian Americans to become involved in leadership roles. He noted that many Asian Americans are good listeners. Sakamoto stated that the ability to listen is an essential but rare quality as far as educational leadership is concerned. Too many administrators say what they think without regard for a different or opposing view.

Benjamin Tom spoke of the curtailed policy decisions that California school boards can make in the post-Proposition 13 era. In addition, school boards must adhere to the complex and lengthy provisions of the state education code and must face such issues as declining enrollment.

Tom said that at the same time there is a recurrent problem in identifying those who represent legitimate educational concerns. Small fringe groups may try to pressure the school board into an action that will benefit only a few.

In addition, operating as one board member out of seven requires that compromises be made. It's not impossible, Tom noted, for it to be necessary "to take one step backwards in order to go two steps forwards."

Tom spent 10 years as a parent attending board meetings. He encouraged others to do the same. Realistically, he said, there is an element of masochism involved in spending 90% of one's evening hours at school board sessions; but "it is the only way to get things done."

Jessie Kobayashi advised the conferees to know what is happening in the schools, who is operating in the formal and informal power structures, who can be influenced, and what are the constraints.

Equally important is for Asian and non-Asian youngsters alike to see Asian Americans in leadership positions. She noted with humor that at first the youngsters in her school district assumed that she was the mother of any dark-haired child in the class. Now, the students recognize her as the superintendent. This is an important change in their perception of Asian Americans.

To improve the schools, she advised the audience to be visible, to build coalitions, research the capability of the school district, and know the facts and figures about the issues. Persistence rather than grand-standing will reap results. At the same time, one should recognize the need to take risks. They're worth it. The results can be very rewarding.

As an example, Kobayashi recounted her own efforts to promote hiring of women as superintendents. When such openings are advertised, she writes a letter to the school board encouraging it to consider qualified candidates from an affirmative action perspective. When a minority or woman is appointed, another letter follows supporting the board's decision and reinforcing its non-discriminatory practices.

Soleng Tom spoke from 15 years experience on the Tucson school board. He noted that an effective board operates from well-developed and comprehensive policies. Such policies enable the board to establish effective working relationships with the school administration, parents, students, and others. However, he observed that in the last ten years the community has begun to ask for more and more control of the schools. While supporting citizen participation, Tom worried that not everyone recognizes the limits of public participation in solving complex administrative problems. He stated that overenthusiastic and emotional responses to an issue do not solve long range problems, especially now when there are budget limitations and not everyone's wants or needs can be satisfied. Tom advocated support of sound management practices based on honesty and a commitment to public service.

IV. Major session: **The Responsiveness of Postsecondary Education to Asian and Pacific American Needs**

Presenters: **Aurelia del Fierro, member; Board of Trustees, Seattle Community College District and Yori Wada, member, Board of Regents, University of California**

Aurelia del Fierro gave an upbeat speech on the "outstanding" job that the nation's 1,250 two-year institutions are doing. Reminding everyone that education "enhances individuals . . . that it enlarges one's powers . . . that it does, indeed, promote individual fulfillment and self-discovery," del Fierro urged the audience to give education its rightful "higher place" in our national priorities. If one is unconcerned with who gets credit and if one is willing to take risks, del Fierro stated, there is no limit to what can be achieved in education. She concluded by citing a few of the many exemplary programs that are part of the Seattle Community College system.

With its budget of $2,300,000,000 and its student enrollment of 80,000, the University of California system sometimes operates like a giant corporation with all its attendant bureaucracy instead of a postsecondary institution providing learning for students observed Regent Yori Wada. Regretfully he stated that the university is in many ways a racist and sexist institution.

For example, he recounted, until recently, the Board of Regents did not have a minority regent. The first was Vilma Martinez, a chicana; and the second was Wada; both were Brown appointees. Last year, admissions criteria were raised for freshmen students without provision for the underrepresentation in the UC student population of Chinese immigrants, Filipino Americans, and Pacific Islanders. Minority faculty who are tenured are few and far between. Minority administrators are even more rare.

Wada expressed frustration at being personally unable to rectify this record. In his view, the prestigious University of California has the "responsibility to be on the cutting edge of admissions of minority faculty and administrators."

At the same time, Wada asked Asian and Pacific Americans to examine their higher education needs. He suggested that the needs are diverse. In addition, he encouraged Asian and Pacific Americans to broaden their outlook on the benefits of education. He recommended higher education not only as a means of securing a job but also as an opportunity to attain greater self, family, community, state, national, and international understanding.

V. Special Session: The Role of the National Institute of Education in Educational Research and Development

Presenter: Gladys Chang Keith Hardy

Created by Congress in 1972, stated Mrs. Hardy, the National Institute of Education (NIE) is mandated to assist in the implementation of national policy to provide every person an equal opportunity to an education of high quality. As such, NIE is mandated to create and make available dependable knowledge to solve problems, advance practice, strengthen the scientific base, and build an R&D system. Specifically, to pursue the twin objectives of furthering educational equity and the quality of education, NIE concentrates on the three areas of teaching and learning, educational policy and organization, and dissemination and improvement of practices.

Mrs. Hardy emphasized that NIE considers its two major purposes "complementary if not inseparable." Defining educational equity to mean *equal access* to a *responsive* education, NIE conceives of increased educational equity as leading to "improvement in the quality of the overall educational enterprise." Similarly, NIE views "improved quality as one central way to achieve greater equity."

"For the Institute, educational equity means research to eliminate the predictive value of race, sex, class and culture; it means research to respond to differences in race, sex, class and culture; and it means research to support fair access to educational resources irrespective of race, sex, class, and culture," stated Mrs. Hardy. While equity concerns are the sole focus of some of NIE's program areas, NIE has established that in all program areas, equity aspects of educational R&D will be an Institute priority. Examples of the former are the desegregation, bilingual education, and women's research programs and the activities to increase the number of educational researchers who are women and minorities. The combined approach is based on the "assumption that there is as yet no single area of investigation which could lead to an equity 'break-through.'"

Regarding Asian and Pacific American educational concerns, said Mrs. Hardy, NIE has had "far too little contact with that community, and far too little of our work has been affected by their views and priorities . . . . It is essential that we develop a conscious focus on the educational needs of Asian and Pacific Americans, but it is equally essential that this focus should not be established from Washington, but should reflect broad consultation and advice from the community itself." Mrs. Hardy concluded by citing some of NIE's moves in this direction, noting that she and several other NIE staff, namely Mary Jackson, Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Gwen Baker, chief of the Minorities and Women Program, and Todd Endo, special assistant to the deputy director for programs, were all available during the conference to discuss and explore these issues with conferees.

VI Special Session: Multicultural Education: A Round Table Discussion

Panelists: Gwendolyn C. Baker, Minorities and Women Program, National Institution of Education, Washington, DC; John Lum, Lau Compliance, San Francisco Unified School District; and Albert Koshiyama, Office of Intergroup Relations, California State Department of Education

Moderator: Florence Yoshiwara, Japanese American Curriculum Project, San Mateo, California

Defining multicultural education as inclusive of multiethnic, bilingual, women's equity, and international education, Baker called for public policy with regard to multicultural education by decision-makers at the local, state, and national levels. She noted that many school districts and states have educational policies that allow for enforcement of multicultural guidelines; however, while the means exist for multiculturalism to proliferate, the commensurate commitment is missing.

Baker advocated the integration of multicultural education into every facet of the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary curriculum. Not only will such a curriculum benefit the majority as well as the minority student but it will also endure and persist in the face of fiscal retrenchment and similar trends.

In Lum's view, the goal of multicultural education is to reduce racial prejudice or increase racial harmony. However, he observed, some advocates of bilingual education or of ethnic identity have promoted separatism, inadvertently or not. Lum argued that education must be multicultural as opposed to bicultural or multiethnic. The latter two perspectives promote ethnic groups as separate, independent entities. Multicultural education, Lum stated, is cross-cultural and includes comparisons and interrelationships.

Lum suggested that innovation and risk are needed in implementing and evaluating multicultural education. He described instructional processes such as discussions of cultural behaviors and cooperative endeavors among children who are brought together from different parts of the city for part of the week. To evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural education, Lum encouraged the use of open-ended measures of attitudes and knowledge.

He concluded by cautioning against ethnicity for its own sake instead of for multiculturalism and quality education.

Koshiyama stressed the need to approach the communication process in school settings from a perspective that documents or identifies equal education opportunity behaviors on the part of the participants. He outlined a series of "reflective" behaviors, i.e., behaviors that reflect a high level of effective communication in a school setting, for school boards, superintendents, and school site personnel.

Koshiyama ended by stating his belief in the view that "one can only teach what he or she *is*, both instructionally and through modelling." Therefore, unless one is truly multicultural in beliefs and actions, s/he cannot promote equal education opportunity but can act only as a deterrent to that goal.

VII. Special Session: **Asian American Studies: Problems and Prognosis for the Future**

Panelists: **Tetsuden Kashima, Asian American Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington; George Kagiwada, Asian American Studies, University of California, Davis, California; Dennis M. Ogawa, American Studies, University of Hawaii; and Ling-chi Wang, Asian American Studies, University of California, Berkeley**

Ogawa outlined the assumptions employed at the University of Hawaii in its course on Japanese Americans. The assumptions underlying the class are:

1. There is a commonality of experiences between Japanese Americans and others;
2. the past is dynamic;
3. culture is not static;
4. the individual culturally reflects his environment;
5. the Hawaiian culturally pluralistic society demands special attention;
6. the course has no racial axe to grind.

He hoped "that such a delineation will serve to illustrate the types of assumptions available for the present and future development of Asian American curricula and, more importantly, invite discussion of the 'unwritten' philosophical concerns controlling the formation of any course.'"

The results of a survey of Asian American Studies programs in Washington State were described by Kashima. Statistics as well as attitudes and projections for the future were gathered through questionnaires sent by mail. A major finding was that fiscal retrenchment combined with a growing immigrant population pose a challenge to the continued survival and viability of Asian American Studies programs in the state.

How Asian American Studies at the University of California, Davis has grappled with the need to do research was discussed by Kagiwada. Initial efforts to pursue research in conjunction with the "community" resulted instead in an increased dichotomy between the campus and Sacramento residents. Countervailing factors also included threats posed to Asian American Studies by the university's lack of commitment and the need to deal with the immediate problems of teaching classes.

As Asian American Studies stabilized, research guidelines designed to enhance the future of Asian American communities were established. Underlying the guidelines was a healthy skepticism about the benefits of conventional research methodology and analytical frameworks. Instead, a major premise was that while research in the Asian American community ideally begins with the community, research realistically will be initiated by students and professional scholars. Therefore, a community-campus board that will monitor and evaluate research in the community should be established. Possible questions for the board to examine are: how will the research benefit the community being studied? How was the topic chosen? What are the researcher's qualifications (e.g., does s/he speak the community's language)? How will the researcher benefit? What are the policy implications of the study?

A case study of Asian American Studies' involvement with an oral history research project in Locke, a Chinese American community in the Sacramento Delta, was presented by Kagiwada to illustrate how the research guidelines might be realized. Stressing that the project has not yet fully been implemented, Kagiwada was optimistic about its implications for other research in different contexts.

Note: NAAAPE regrets that Ling-chi Wang's comments have not been made available for inclusion.

VIII. Special Session: Education and Income Inequality among Asian Americans

Presenter: Federico M. Macaranas, Department of Economics, Manhattan College, Bronx, New York

After discussing in general the weak links between education and income among Asian American groups, Macaranas focused on two research studies that he has conducted.

In one, Macaranas surveyed educational attitudes and work/income opportunity perceptions of young Filipino Americans in New York City. Noting that Americans tend to pursue higher education as an investment in human capital, Macaranas speculated that Filipinos who have received their training in the Philippines tend to view education differently, i.e., on a consumption basis. This and other attitudinal factors that surfaced in the survey raise interesting questions about how race inequity in income and employment might be amelio ated.

In the second study, Macaranas examined employer preferences with respect to certain work force attributes that may be inferred from employee resumes. He found that racial discrimination at the resume evaluation phase of the job competition process in the middle management market for nurses exists and that the disadvantage of a Filipino surname is more significant for those born in the U.S. than for those born in the Philippines.

IX. Presentation: **Political Definitions of Educational Issues Affecting Immigrant Children**

Presenter: **Amefil Agbayani, Operation Manong, University of Hawaii**

Agbayani reviewed studies and programs relating to immigrant children enrolled in public schools in Hawaii. Her assumption was that the ways in which immigrant children are described in educational policies have political significance and evaluative implications. Some of the questions that she touched upon were: who defines what is a problem? who is defined as a problem? who is required to change or adjust?

Agabayani found differences in perceptions between school officials and community members with respect to how each group defined the educational needs of students. School officials tended to describe certain student characteristics as educational deficits while community members considered the same characteristics to be strengths.

While offering no answer to the resolution of this apparent conflict, Agbayani concluded that a significant contribution to students, of both minority and majority backgrounds, would be to provide them with many perspectives with which to view reality. Multiple perspectives may "empower" students to deal more effectively with their future.

X. Presentation: Bilingual Day Care Programming for Asian Children

Presenter: Dale Otto, Washington Center for Early Childhood Education, Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington

"One of the basic needs of all children is for concerned advocates," stated Otto. "In a society which accords children inadequate value and no power, those of us with some power are obligated to use it as we can to develop a stronger public conscience and sense of value and support for children."

From this viewpoint, Otto went on to describe the characteristics of a child care program that would nurture children in a manner consistent with and supportive of their basic needs, language and culture, and home and community.

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CAPTIONS FOR PHOTOS

1. Yori Wada, Board of Regents, University of California and Aurelia del Fierro, Board of Trustees, Seattle Community Colleges

2. (left to right) Mimi Fellores, BABEL Lau Center, Berkeley, California; Doris Wong, Bilingual Program, Los Angeles Unified School District, and Rosita Galang, Multicultural Program, University of San Francisco

3. (left to right) Gil Cho, moderator, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Superintendent Paul Sakamoto, Mountain View, California; School Board Member Benjamin Tom, San Francisco, California; Superintendent Jessie Kobayashi, Dublin, California; and School Board Member Soleng Tom, Tucson, Arizona

4. (left to right) Mark Tajima, PAC, Washington, DC; Linda Hanten, MALDEF, San Francisco; Karl Nobuyuki, JACL, San Francisco; and Jim Egawa, Tacoma Public Schools

5. (center) Federico Macaranas, Economics Department, Manhattan College, Bronx, New York

6. (center) Stephen Tom, APACS/US Office of Education and (to his left) Elaine Cadigan, Department of Education, Agana, Guam

7. (left to right) George Kagiwada, University of California, Davis; Tetsuden Kashima, University of Washington, Seattle; Dennis Ogawa, University of Hawaii, Honolulu; and Ling-chi Wang, University of California, Berkeley

8. (left) Suzie Kim Oh, KEYS Program, Los Angeles Unified School District and (right) Mary Lee Shon, ESL/Bilingual Branch, Los Angeles Unified School District

ANNOUNCEMENT

The next NAAAPE conference will be held in April 1980 in Washington, DC. For further information, contact Jeannette Kwok, 2727 29th St., NW, Washington, DC 20008 or John Park, Bilingual Education Project, Arlington Public Schools, 1426 North Quincy St., Arlington, VA 22207.